



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START



## Child Care Services Winter 2023 Newsletter

Dear Child Care Providers,

Happy New Year! I'm excited to let you know that our Family Friendly Licensing Dashboard will go live in January! Many of you were involved in provider focus groups conducted by our partners in this project, the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS). The input and feedback given by the provider community helped so much in the development of this tool.



The Family Friendly Licensing Dashboard gives families the ability to have information at their fingertips about licensed child care programs. The dashboard was created with families in mind and provides an overview of child care programs in a user friendly, easy access format. The foundation of the dashboard is compliance and prominently displays a program's most recent compliance zone determination of Good Standing, Support or Deficient. There are definitions and explanations of the regulatory language throughout the

dashboard to assist families with understanding the rules child care programs are required to follow daily. It's also a tool that providers can use to showcase their compliance history to families. The vast majority of child care programs in Georgia maintain a good standing compliance status, and it's important for families to have access to that information. Full licensing reports will continue to be posted on the DECAL website. More information is shared below.

I also want to let you know to keep an eye out for two upcoming webinars. The first will be scheduled in January and will be the kick off for our School Age grants. The second will be scheduled in February and will kick off our Health and Safety Grants. More details coming soon.

I hope 2023 brings health, love, and prosperity to you, your staff, and your families.

Take care,

*Pam Stevens*

Pam Stevens  
Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services

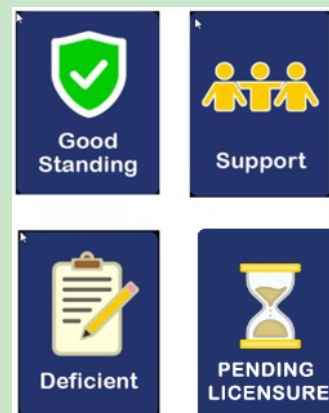


**Child Care  
SERVICES**

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## The Family Friendly Licensing Dashboard

The dashboard will be incorporated into the quality rated website that families currently use when searching for child care. Four icons were developed to depict if a program is in Good Standing, Support, Deficient or Pending Licensure. Families will be able to click the icon that will lead them to Compliance At a Glance for the specific child care program they are researching. The Compliance At a Glance feature shows a child care program's compliance history for the past three years.



The Family Friendly Licensing Dashboard goes live in January. Watch for more details!

## URGENT:

### Criminal Records Check Fingerprinting Process Update

[CLICK FOR DETAILS](#)



## Explore the Updated GELDS Website

The new Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) website merges the Planning Educational Activities for Children (PEACH) online lesson planning, activities and media resources with the GELDS standards and resources website to streamline lesson planning for child care programs. At this website, child care providers can view the standards, create custom lesson plans, design their own template, upload activities and media, create or customize activities and more.



Visit our Updated  
Website



**Help your child grow  
and thrive with CDC's free  
*Milestone Tracker* app.**



[cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker](https://cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker)

Download the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) developmental milestones tracker app! Parents and caregivers can track children's milestones from age 2 months to 5 years with the CDC's easy-to-use illustrated checklists; get tips from CDC for encouraging a child's development; and find out what to do if you are ever concerned about how a child is developing.

From birth to age 5, children should reach milestones in how he or she plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves. Photos and videos in this app illustrate each milestone and make tracking them for your child easy and fun!

Click the picture above to learn more!

## **Play in Early Childhood: The Role of Play in Any Setting**

By The Center of the Developing Child at Harvard University





The science of child development points to three core principles that can guide what society needs to do to help children and families thrive. These include:

1. Supporting responsive relationships
2. Strengthening core life skills
3. Reducing sources of stress

Play in early childhood is an effective way of supporting all three of these principles. In this video, learn more about how play can foster children's resilience to hardship, and how the complex interactions involved when children play help build their brains.

[Click to Read Entire Article](#)

## A 5-Minute Daily Routine That Can Improve Listening Skills

One widely recommended strategy by children's health professionals is to engage a child in short, daily sessions of child-led play. Called "special time," it gives young children a chance to interact with their caregivers without

the stress of having to follow directions — which in turn, strengthens the bond between them, says Roger Harrison, a pediatric psychologist with Nemours Children's Health in Wilmington, Del.

"Special time increases opportunities for closeness between a parent and child. As that attachment is building, it increases the likelihood that a child is going to listen or value what a parent has to say," he says.

The concept, developed by psychologist Sheila Eyberg in the 1970s, is simple. For at least 5 minutes a day, sit down with a child and join them in an activity. That includes drawing, playing with dolls, building blocks — anything that doesn't have a right or wrong way to play, says child psychologist Kerrie Murphy. Don't ask questions or give commands — this is your child's time to be in charge.



[Click to Read Full Article](#)

## It's Time to Get Georgia Reading!

IT TAKES  
ALL OF US  
WORKING  
TOGETHER



GET GEORGIA  
READING

Two-thirds of Georgia's third-graders are not reading on grade level, bringing long-term negative consequences to these children, their families, their communities, and our state. Unwilling

to yield any longer to the unspeakable rate of illiteracy in Georgia, **hundreds of public and private leaders** from across the state and across sectors have come together to take on third-grade reading as an urgent priority for all who care about children's health and well-being. Together, they developed a four-pillar framework outlining the conditions necessary for every child in Georgia to become a proficient reader by the end of third grade, paving the way to improved outcomes throughout school and life.

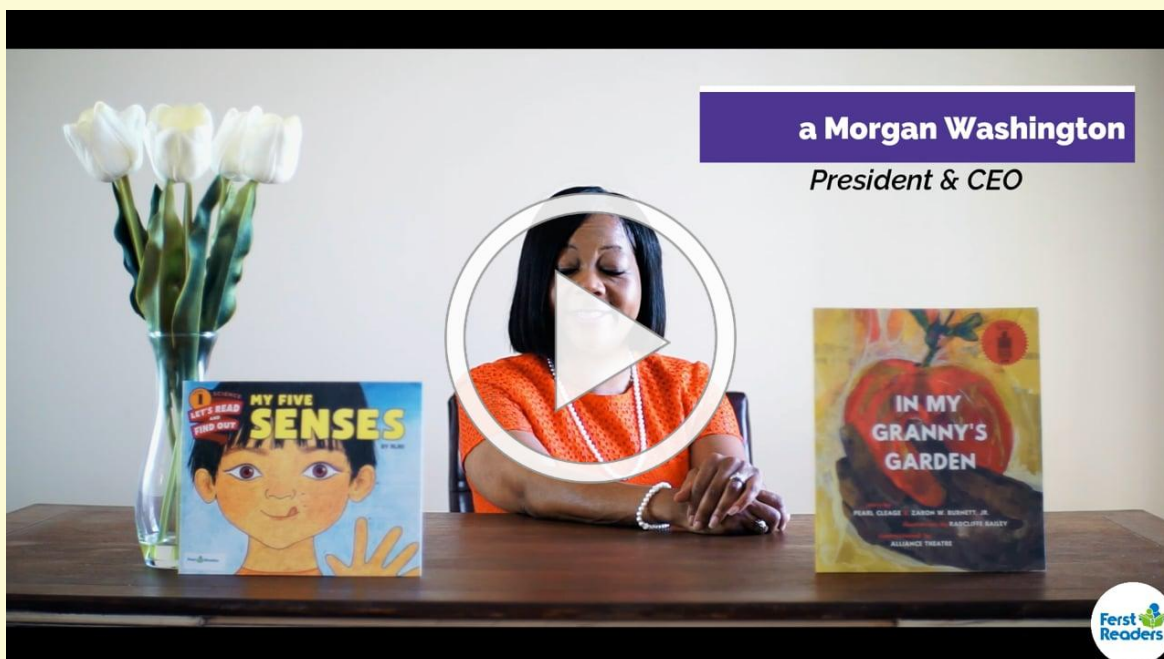
[Learn More](#)



Ferst Readers was founded in 1999 to address the growing problem of children, many from low-income communities, entering kindergarten

without basic early literacy skills and school readiness, a preventable problem that has far-reaching impacts throughout students' lives. The recipe for early school success is simple: start school with strong literacy skills. Ferst Readers' recipe for encouraging early literacy development is even simpler. Ensure children have developmentally appropriate books in their home and provide parents with resources that support them in their role as their child's first teacher.

Children in the Ferst Readers literacy program receive a bookstore-quality, age-specific book, and resources mailed to them at home every month until their fifth birthday. It's this access to print that helps create a language-rich environment in the home.



[Register a Child Today!](#)

# Are You Looking for FREE Virtual Trainings?

The Technical Assistance Unit within Child Care Services offers FREE trainings via [ZOOM](#) meetings. All participants must register for the trainings through the [Georgia Professional Development System \(GaPDS\)](#). Once registered, a link will be sent to your email to join the training via webinar.

**ALL trainings will be held from 12:30 - 1:30 PM.**

TRAINING NAME	DATE
2022-2023 Child Care Learning Center Core Rules Virtual Refresher	Tuesday, January 17, 2023
2022-2023 Active Supervision	Thursday, January 26, 2023
2022-2023 Transportation & Field Trip Safety	Thursday, February 2, 2023
2022-2023 Lesson Planning 101 for Beginners	Thursday, February 16, 2023
2022-2023 Staff Morale	Thursday, March 2, 2023
2022-2023 Family Child Care Learning Home Core Rules Virtual Refresher	Thursday, March 16, 2023
2022-2023 Handwashing During Critical Times	Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Questions? Please email [ccs.ta@decal.ga.gov](mailto:ccs.ta@decal.ga.gov) or call (770)344-5891

[Register Now!](#)

## Caregiver Handouts: Building the Core Skills Youth Need for Life

All youth need to develop a set of core life skills to manage school, work, outside interests, and social relationships successfully. From the perspective of brain development, these skills include planning, focus, self-control, awareness, and flexibility



—also known as “executive function” and “self-regulation” skills.

This guide for caregivers who work with adolescents explains the science behind the core life skills that youth need, what affects the development of these skills, and how caregivers can help, including:

- 5 Ways to Help Youth Build Their Core Life Skills
- How Stress Affects Developing Core Life Skills
- 5 Ways to Deliver Services That Reduce Stress



Visit Website for  
Handout

## Consumer Product Safety Commission Children's Products Recalls



Sign up today to receive up-to-date email notifications whenever children's products are recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

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